

WEST UNIVERSITY OF TIMIȘOARA

DOMAIN: PHILOSOPHY

HABILITATION THESIS

**PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION:
THEORETICAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN BIOETHICS,
EDUCATION, AND BUSINESS**

SUMMARY

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SUMMARY

My habilitation thesis, entitled *Practical Philosophy in the Era of Globalisation: Theoretical Challenges and Opportunities in Bioethics, Education, and Business*, systematically and rigorously presents my primary scientific, professional, and academic achievements following the conferment of my PhD. Ethics is the philosophical domain that has consistently captivated my scholarly interest, to which I have devoted a substantial portion of my research efforts within both theoretical discourse and applied ethics.

The first part of the thesis outlines the key scientific, professional and academic contributions, categorised according to the research trajectories pursued after completing my doctorate. This section constitutes the most extensive part of the thesis.

The first section of this part highlights the scientific results and research directions, with a short introductory section offering a concise overview of these results. The research pathway initiated by my doctoral thesis in ethics and bioethics has provided the foundation for novel interdisciplinary enquiries, building on prior achievements and incorporating emerging themes within my field of study. This ethical research adopts a multidisciplinary framework, employing diverse analytical perspectives to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues under investigation.

The first chapter of the thesis, entitled 'Ethics, Normativity, and Human Life in the Era of Globalisation', consists of two subchapters. The first subchapter addresses theoretical ethics, focusing on norms and sources of normativity by identifying the foundational bases of ethical normativity. The second subchapter rigorously examines the prospect of global bioethics and the ethical challenges that are emerging in this field amid the application of new human enhancement biotechnologies. Situated within a multidisciplinary context that integrates philosophical, religious and historical concepts, this inquiry elucidates the complexities that arise from extending bioethical considerations from regional or continental to global dimensions. It emphasises the need for global bioethics, highlighting that world religions can contribute essential principles and values to the development of global ethics when interpreted independently of religious dogma and based on moral reasoning. The study clarifies that this construct

should neither be conflated with universal ethics nor be considered a global religion. Research findings on human enhancement deepen our understanding of the risks associated with the unregulated and limitless modification of human nature in the absence of ethical and legal governance.

The second chapter, 'Ethical education and character formation in the connected society: harnessing classical and modern conceptual resources', explores ethical education and character formation among young people by utilising classical and contemporary conceptual resources within modern society. The philosophy of Spinoza provides enduringly relevant resources applicable to contemporary ethical education. Central to Spinoza's pedagogical framework is the notion of freedom, and his ideas continue to inspire educational practice. Comparative analyses of ethical education as conceived by Bertrand Russell and John Dewey reveal divergences and convergences, notably Russell's critical stance towards pragmatism. This comparative approach yields several insights: Spinoza emphasises causal understanding and the cultivation of adequate ideas, fostering affective and rational freedom. Russell prioritises rationality, critical enquiry and moral universalism, advocating education that cultivates autonomous, ethically conscientious individuals. Dewey espouses a pragmatic, contextual model in which ethical education evolves alongside society. The chapter concludes with an examination of the ethical implications of neurotechnologies in education. It argues for their cautious adoption within a robust ethical and legal framework, in order to mitigate potential abuses and safeguard children's health amid increasing connectivity.

Chapter Three, 'Business Ethics and Social Responsibility', addresses business ethics, a rapidly expanding area of research. It investigates the influence of ethical principles on taxpayer compliance, ethical decision-making and tourist behaviour. It also examines gender inequality in business contexts, revealing persistent global disparities in remuneration and employment between men and women. These findings are disseminated across seven articles published in Web of Science-indexed journals (Q1 and Q2), other recognised indexed journals and collective volumes issued by CNCS-endorsed Romanian publishers.

Chapter Four, 'Philosophy and religion: from parallel paths to points of convergence', which is the final chapter, presents research on the points of convergence

between philosophy and religion, focusing on the concepts of prayer and temptation. The findings demonstrate that philosophical scrutiny enriches understanding of religious concepts, providing clarity and generating novel interpretive possibilities.

The second section, 'Academic and professional achievement', outlines my academic and professional achievements to date, including my capacity for leadership in coordinating research teams, organising and managing didactic activities, and facilitating learning and scholarly enquiry.

The second part of the thesis, 'Academic, scientific and professional career evolution and development plan', details my academic and professional career development plan alongside future research directions. These plans aim to deepen ongoing scientific investigations and explore new interdisciplinary intersections between ethics and emerging fields.

Building upon my book, *Normativity and Bioethics: Contemporary Philosophical Aspects* (2014), I plan to expand upon the topic of moral judgement in relation to decision-making processes within applied ethical contexts. I will employ an interdisciplinary methodology that integrates insights from moral psychology. Human bioethics remains a key area of my research, with planned investigations into the ethical concerns arising from neurotechnology applications. Neuroethics, neurophilosophy and neurolaw will be core areas of future research.

I will continue to advance research on ethical education and character development. This includes an individual project that aims to incorporate B. Russell's ethical philosophy into Romanian ethical discourse. In the field of business ethics, I will extend my focus to gender discrimination and the emerging topic of the silver economy, which I will pursue as part of a multidisciplinary research team.

Finally, I intend to explore the intersection between philosophy and religion in relation to the concept of the afterlife, striving to maintain a balance that honours the integrity of both disciplines, without subordinating one to the other or adopting an triumphalist stance.

The third and final part of the thesis, 'References', brings together an extensive list of my published articles relevant to the themes addressed, illustrating my scientific contributions in these areas. Also included are the most significant academic sources from

the specialised literature, both classic and contemporary, that formed the theoretical basis for the analysis. This section highlights the thesis's interdisciplinary nature, bringing together works on theoretical ethics, bioethics in the era of globalisation, ethical education and business ethics, as well as considerations regarding points of convergence between philosophy and religion.